

*The groves were
God's first temples.*

-William Cullen Bryant

Our Mission

The mission of the California Department of Parks and Recreation is to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.

GRAY DAVIS
Governor

MARY D. NICHOLS
Secretary for Resources

RUTH COLEMAN
Acting Director, California State Parks



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www.parks.ca.gov

Richardson Grove State Park
1600 U.S. Highway 1
Garberville, CA 95542
(707)247-3318

Richardson Grove State Park



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Richardson Grove State Park—traditional destination of countless vacationing families since the early decades of the twentieth century—is one of California’s premier state parks. Situated in the majestic redwood forests of southern Humboldt County, “The Grove,” as it was fondly nicknamed, started in 1922 with 120 acres. It now encompasses approximately 2,000 acres. Located about 200 miles north of San Francisco and seven miles south of Garberville, the park is bisected by Highway 101 and the south fork of the Eel River.

CULTURAL HISTORY

The first known inhabitants of this region, the Sinkiyone people, used the area as a seasonal encampment for hunting, fishing and food gathering. These expert hunters, members of the Athapascan people, used trained dogs to drive game into the river so that it could be more easily caught. Both men and women made baskets. The women created the household basketry and the men made those used for hunting and fishing.

The first settler recorded in the area, Kentuckian Ruben Reed, purchased the land on the south fork of the Eel

River in the late 1860s. His brother and their widowed father homesteaded 160 acres that are now part of the park. In the early 1900s Henry DeVoy purchased the Reeds’ land, then leased the redwood grove to a man named Freeman, who built a store, a dining room and fifteen cabins at the site of today’s visitor center.



Eel River Canyon



South fork of the Eel River

In 1922 the Save-the-Redwoods League, concerned about the potential destruction of the trees by highway construction and logging, persuaded the State to acquire 120 acres of the redwood grove. Between 1922 and 1932, Freeman operated the new park as a concession. The present visitor center was built in 1931, and the Civilian Conservation Corps constructed the campgrounds, picnic facilities, trails, water systems and restrooms in 1933. Today, only the visitor center and a couple of cabins remain, lessening the human impact on the resources.

PLANT COMMUNITIES

The most notable natural feature of Richardson Grove is the old-growth redwood forest, which thrives in the area’s mild climate. Many trees in the grove are more than 1,000 years old; several are more than 300 feet tall. Strolling among these towering redwood giants is an unforgettable experience. Here visitors can see the ninth tallest coast redwood, a walk-through tree, and a fallen tree growth-ring exhibit that has drawn visitors since 1933.

Redwood sorrel, ferns and mosses take advantage of the deep shade in the heart of the forest. Younger redwoods, Douglas fir, California laurel, various oaks and madrones compete for sunlight and moisture outside the established groves. Lower growth includes huckleberry, manzanita, coyote brush, Douglas iris, calypso orchids and redwood violets. Periodic flooding of the Eel River has done tremendous damage. Park facilities were destroyed and many trees lost in the floods of 1955 and 1964. In February 1986 the river again overflowed its banks, destroying the campfire center and picnic area.

WILDLIFE

The south fork of the Eel River—named for the Pacific lamprey—runs through the heart of the park. Lampreys live in the



Coast redwood branch



Silver Salmon

ocean for one to two years, then work their way upstream in late spring and early summer to spawn. During the fall and winter months, salmon and steelhead inhabit the river. Wildlife includes black-tailed deer, raccoons, gray foxes and river otters. Be sure to ask the rangers about the “bat tree.” The wide variety of birds includes great blue herons, belted kingfishers, osprey, eagles, California quail, acorn woodpeckers and dark-eyed juncos.

ACCESSIBLE FEATURES &

- The visitor center
- Several campsites are on flat ground with level ground between the parking lot, the sites and the restrooms. Call the park for details.

VISITOR CENTER

The visitor center, staffed by volunteers and operated by the nonprofit Richardson Grove Interpretive Association, features displays about Richardson Grove’s

natural history. Other educational wildlife exhibits in the center invite children to

handle such natural items as rocks, pinecones and redwood bark. Trail guides and other interpretive publications are available for sale.

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Camping

Richardson Grove has 170 family campsites in three campgrounds. Each site has a fire ring, picnic table and food locker, with restrooms and hot showers nearby. Sites can accommodate trailers up to 24 feet and motor homes up to 30 feet, and one site is reserved for hikers and cyclists. Oak Flat Campground, on the east side of the river among oaks and open, grassy meadows, is only open during the summer since access is via a low-water, seasonal bridge. The year-round group camp, along the river among giant redwoods, can accommodate up to 40 people and 11 cars and has accessible restrooms. Reservations are recommended year-round.

Picnicking/Day Use

The picnic area is along the Eel River under redwoods and oaks. The river is a popular spot for swimming and sunbathing during the summer and for salmon and steelhead fishing during the winter. A short redwood nature trail is nearby, as well as several hiking trails that range from gentle to more strenuous.

Events and Programs

- Summer evening campfire programs feature songs, storytelling and interpretive talks.
- The Junior Ranger Program teaches children age 7 to 12 about the park’s natural and

cultural features, and children age 3 to 6 can participate in the Cub’s Club program.

- The Litter-Getter Program encourages children of all ages to respect their environment through recycling.
- Guided nature walks allow visitors to enjoy the redwoods and slow down a bit while learning about nature.

PLEASE REMEMBER

- Diving and jumping into the river are not permitted.
- Children should be supervised by an adult who can swim.
- Purchase firewood at the park. Fires are permitted only in fireplaces provided. No ground fires are allowed.
- Plants, animals and park features are protected by law and must not be disturbed.
- Bicycles are not allowed on the trails.
- Feeding wild animals is prohibited.
- Dogs must be kept on a leash (six-foot maximum length) during the day and in your tent or motor vehicle at night. They are not allowed on the hiking trails.

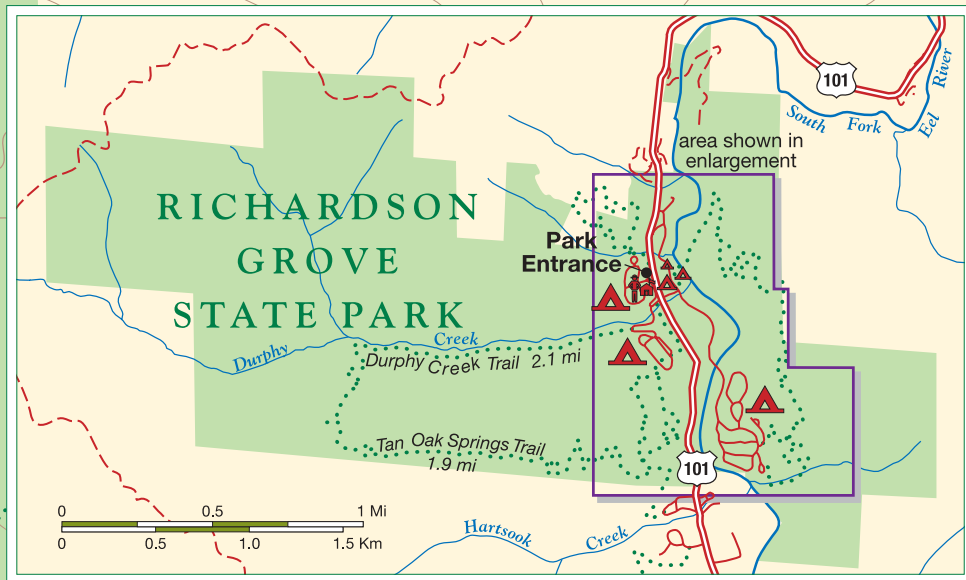
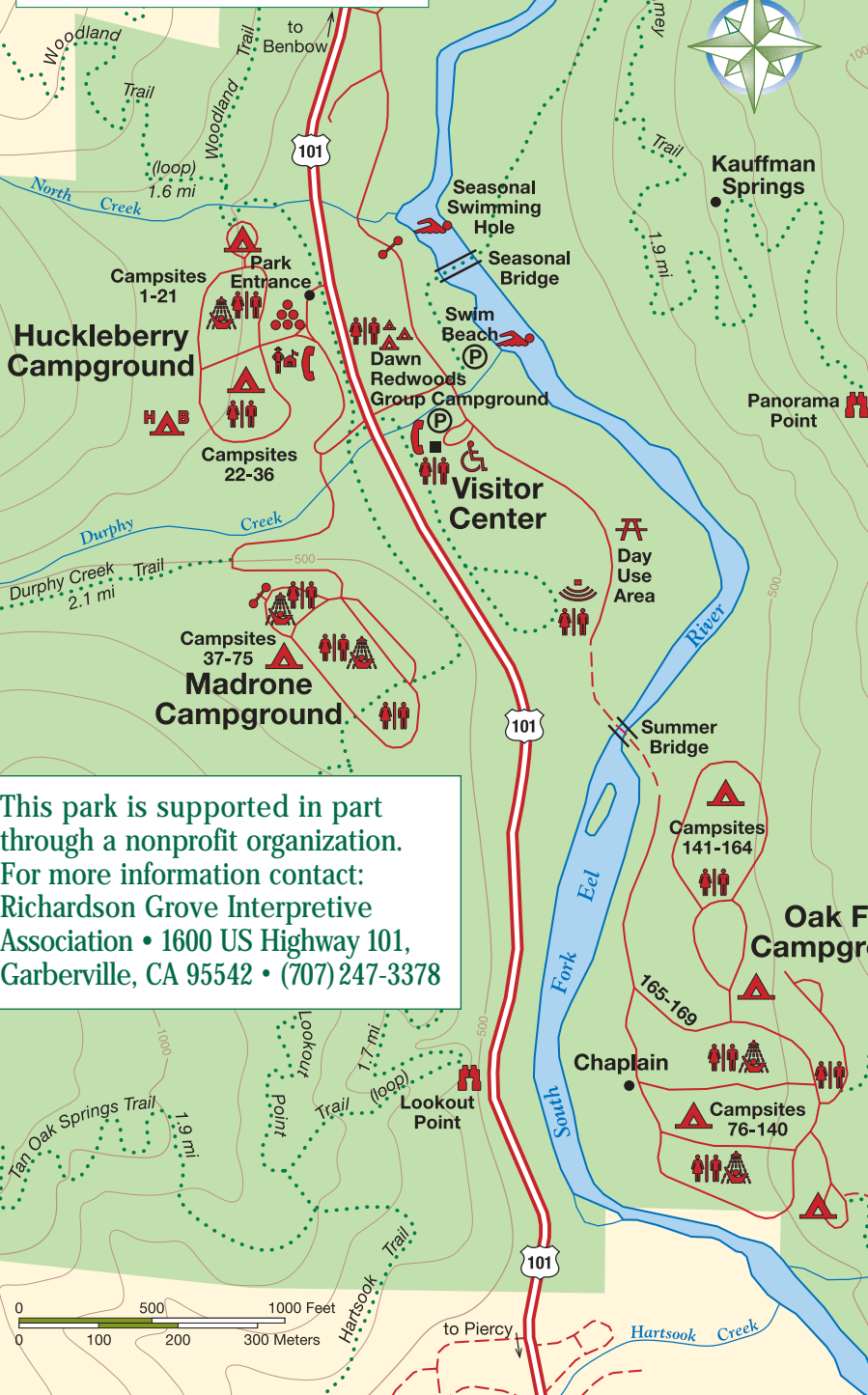
NEARBY STATE PARKS

- Benbow Lake State Recreation Area, 2 miles south of Garberville (707) 923-3238
- Sinkyone Wilderness State Park, 50 miles north of Fort Bragg (707) 986-7711
- Standish-Hickey State Recreation Area, 2 miles north of Leggett (707) 925-6482



Trailside exhibit

Richardson Grove State Park



Legend

	Paved road		Campground		Ranger Station
	Unpaved road		Hike/Bike Campground		Restroom
	Trail		Group Campground		Shower
	Accessible Feature		Gate		Swimming
	Campfire Center		Parking		Telephone
	Firewood Sales		Picnic Area		Viewpoint

This park is supported in part through a nonprofit organization. For more information contact: Richardson Grove Interpretive Association • 1600 US Highway 101, Garberville, CA 95542 • (707) 247-3378

